

## **ABSTRACT**

A method for controlling a wheel drive system of a hybrid electric vehicle when starting a power source. The hybrid electric vehicle includes first and second power sources, a motor, and a power transfer unit adapted to drive a vehicle wheel. The method includes determining whether the first power source is to be started, determining whether a level of torque requested by a vehicle operator is greater than a threshold value, maintaining a current gear ratio if the threshold value is exceeded, and providing a target level of torque to the power transfer unit.